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UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 003429

SIPDIS

DEPT. FOR INL/LP, WHA/PD AND WHA/CEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: HERO OF THE WEEK -- INL PROGRAM SIGNLED OUT BY
LOCAL NEWSPAPER

REF: STATE 259957

¶11. Tegucigalpa's local El Heraldo newspaper singled out the December 18 signing of the INL face sheet amendment as a "hero" of the week. The paper praised the U.S. as Wednesday's hero because the INL program donated 12.7 million lempiras (750K USD) to support the fight against drug trafficking in a signing ceremony with Vice President Armida de Lopez Contreras, who is also the head of the Honduran Government's National Commission to Fight Drug Trafficking. The newspaper chose the INL program donation for its regular daily feature in its December 19 edition and then re-ran the piece in its weekly summary in its Sunday, December 22 edition as well.

¶12. The Mission's INL program officer and PAS office worked closely on the press release and PAS did an excellent job in spreading the good news. PAS also posted the press release, photos from the ceremony, and the Ambassador's remarks on the Embassy web page. Publicity from the event also caught the attention of other government ministers who were quick to approach the INL program officer for additional details on the distribution of the funds.

¶13. Post signed its face sheet amendment on December 18 in a signing ceremony with Vice President Armida de Lopez Contreras. Funds will be sub-obligated expeditiously to various projects, as approved by INL in reftel.

Palmer